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TAGS: [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: GENERAL DISCONTENT AROUND THE HOUSE

Classified By: Robert Downes, Acting DCM, for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) According to local media, following his testimony on the morning of July 1 before the Venezuelan Supreme Court (TSJ) at which he requested the court to prohibit the Chavista slogan "Fatherland, Socialism or Death!" stricken from military drill and ceremony, Brigadier General (BG) Angel Omar Vivas Perdomo was intercepted and briefly detained by agents of the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DIM). The agents questioned Vivas at DIM headquarters for nine hours.

¶2. (SBU) BG Vivas was then brought before military prosecutors and warned that he was under "pre-indictment" for bringing discredit to the service before the TSJ, as well as for insubordination and disobedience. (Note: In 2004, General Francisco Uson was sentenced to five and a half years for "discredit to the service." He was released after serving three and a half years. End Note.) Vivas was released that night. According to his lawyer, Jose Maria Zaa, as a condition of his release the Brigadier cannot travel outside Caracas, is prohibited from having contact with the media and must report before a courts martial every two weeks. Zaa also noted that "pre-indictment" doesn't exist under Venezuelan law, calling the process "vindictive."

¶3. (SBU) On May 15, Vivas had filed the motion to have what he called "a repugnant Cuban slogan" removed on the grounds that it violates Article 328 of Chavez' 1999 Bolivarian constitution which requires the Venezuelan Armed Forces to be an apolitical, professional institution.

¶4. (C) Comment: General Vivas' case has brought unwelcome media attention on tensions between Chavistas and Institutionalists in the armed forces and the fact that Vivas, like almost 1000 other officers suspected of insufficient revolutionary fervor, is unassigned but still drawing a salary to sit around the house. End Comment.  
DUDDY